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VOYAGES

TO

MADEIRA, &c.

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VOYAGES

TO THE

MADEIRA,

AND

LEEWARD CARIBBEAN ISLES:

WITH

SKETCHES

OF THE

NATURAL HISTORY OF THESE ISLANDS.

By MARIA R******.

EDINBURGH:
PRINTED FOR PETER HILL,
AND
T. CADELL, LONDON.

1792.

RPJCB

TO

MR WILLIAM SMELLIE,

MEMBER OF THE ANTIQUARIAN AND ROYAL SOCIETIES OF EDINBURGH.

Dumfries, April 1792.

PERMIT me, my dear Sir, to addreſs theſe Sketches of Natural Hiſtory to you. Believe me, it is not from motives of vanity that I wiſh to prefix the name of a man ſo well known, and ſo deſervedly eſteemed, in the literary world, to a performance ſo little calculated to afford any degree of credit to his patronage; but merely becauſe you lately expreſſed a deſire of having it ſubmitted to your examination; and I really know nobody to whoſe

whoſe candid criticiſms I would ſo gladly commend it. Beſides, after it has once undergone a few corrections from your improving hand, I ſhall feel leſs timid in offering it to the peruſal of thoſe friends for whoſe entertainment and information it was originally written. If I have been ſucceſsful enough to make it anſwer either of theſe views, I aſſure you my hopes and ambition will be fully gratified. It is by no means ſo correct as I could have wiſhed; for, although a great part of it was written in an iſland, where I lived in an almoſt total ſecluſion from ſociety and diſſipation, yet my marriage (which took place ſoon after) by obtruding on me a number of domeſtic occupations, interrupted my courſe of ſtudy, and prevented me from finiſhing, with any degree of accuracy, an undertaking that required more time and labour than I had then leiſure

to

to beſtow on it. Such, however, as it is, I will ſubmit it to your inſpection, and that of a few friends, whoſe partiality, perhaps, for its writer, more than any intrinſic merit it can lay claim to, may incline them to regard it in a favourable point of view.

In my ſketch of the Natural Hiſtory of Antigua, I have adopted the zoological claſſification of Mr Pennant, as being more elegant and perſpicuous, and better adapted to the ſimplicity of my plan, than the grand ſcale upon which the immortal Linnaeus has erected his Syſtema Naturae. I have, however, always made uſe of his generic and ſpecific names, becauſe they are now the moſt univerſally received by naturaliſts.

In the botanical part of my hiſtory of Antigua, I have given the Linnaean names to every plant where I could undoubtedly aſcertain them to be the proper ones; to ſome few, which I could not be ſo certain of, I have contented myſelf with prefixing the names that were current for them in the country.

And now, my dear Sir, that I have commended my book to your indulgence, I muſt conclude, by commending yourſelf to that Power, who has already beſtowed on you three of the greateſt bleſſings in his diſpoſal—a head formed for the ſtudy and contemplation of his own works, a heart glowing with benevolence to all his creatures, and a faculty of diſpoſing the minds of all who know you to ſentiments of friendſhip and eſteem.

Believe

Believe me, there are few who poſſeſs a higher degree of both, than your ſincerely obliged and faithful

MARIA R******.

A
VOYAGE
TO
MADEIRA.

1788.

A

VOYAGE

TO

MADEIRA.

The gentle ſpring which but ſalutes us here,
Inhabits there, and courts them all the year.—WALLER.

Hic ver perpetuum, atque alienis menſibus aeſtas.—VIRG.

I LEFT England on the 11th of April 1788, and embarked, from Portſmouth, on board the Britannia, a merchant ſhip, commanded by Captain Woodyear. The party conſiſted of three gentlemen and two ladies, paſſengers, beſides my father, mother, and myſelf.—The weather proved exceſſively calm, and it was not till the 25th that we came in ſight of Porto Santo; the next day we paſſed the Deſertas, a cluſter of little iſlands, moſtly uninhabited; the cliffs next the ſea are rugged and barren; but the largeſt, call-

ed the Great Deſerta, affords paſturage for ſheep; and the grey canary bird is found there.

The iſland of Madeira is about 40 leagues in circumference, ſituated in 16 deg. of W. long. and 33 of N. lat. We landed in the evening, through the moſt prodigious ſurf I ever ſaw; our Engliſh built boat was unable to withſtand the force of it, and we were obliged to ſhift from that into one of the flat-bottomed boats of the Portugueſe; we got aſhore, however, very ſafely, and were received into the houſe of Mr Biſſet, one of the principal wine-merchants here, who entertained us with the utmoſt politeneſs and hoſpitality.

The next day (being Sunday) we went to hear maſs in the Great Cathedral, which is really a noble edifice, and ornamented within in a moſt coſtly ſtile; it is built of white ſtone, exceedingly ſpacious, and divided into little alcoves, or chapels; ſome of which are parted by a paliſade of maſſive ſilver, near ſix feet high from the

the ground; the ceiling is beautifully encruſted with moſaic; the walls are chiefly lined with marble, and hung with fine tapeſtry and pictures; the altars are perfumed with frankincenſe, and hung round with curtains of ſilver tiſſue; and the candleſticks and cenſers of gold, covered with precious ſtones. There are ſeveral other Roman Catholic churches at Madeira; the College Church, in particular, is remarkable for its elegance. After maſs, we viſited the convent of Santa-Clara, who is a ſaint of high repute among the Portugueſe; but, notwithſtanding her holy character, the votaries of her order at Madeira are not very numerous, the convent including but eighty nuns, and no novice having taken the veil for upwards of twenty years. This is a very ſtrict order; for even the females of our party were not admitted within the grate. Indeed the manſion appeared ſo gloomy and diſmal, that I did not feel much inclination to paſs its barrier. The nuns appeared extremely happy in our company, and entreated us to renew our viſits often; but, on our taking leave of them, they aſſumed

a very melancholy air, and candidly confeſſed how much they envied us our liberty.

The day after, we took an opportunity of viewing the town, which is ſituated on a bay in the S. E. part of the iſland, and is called Fonchal (from the great quantity of fennel that was found growing on the ſhore.) The fort is placed at a little diſtance, on a ſmall iſland called the Loo Rock; it is a kind of Gothic caſtle, or tower, defended by a battery of cannon. The town is dirty and ſhabby, though by no means ſmall; the houſes are mean and irregular; the ſtreets are dreadfully ill paved, and extremely narrow; the uſe of carriages being totally unknown at Madeira, the inhabitants convey themſelves in hammocks and palanquins; and, inſtead of carts, they employ ſledges drawn by oxen. On our return from our morning's ramble, we received a viſit from Don Henriquez de Correya, and afterwards dined with Mr and Mrs Achmuty.

Tueſday

Tueſday morning we viſited a convent of Franciſcans, which is reckoned of all monaſtic orders the moſt numerous. All ſorts of property are forbidden by this rule, and the Friars go barefooted; their habit is a brown, coarſe ſtuff, with a cowl; and they have a cord tied round their waiſt, from whence they aſſume the appellation of *Cordeliers*. They are alſo forbidden to receive money; but I had a very entertaining proof of their ingenious equivocations in that reſpect; for, on offering one of them a piece of money, he held up his hands as if fearing they ſhould be polluted by the touch, at the ſame time turning his head, pointed to a little pocket, in which I accordingly ſlipped a dollar; and it had ſo good an effect, that he obligingly offered to give us a ſight of ſome of the relicts and curioſities of the monaſtery. Among others, he conducted us into a cell entirely built of human bones and ſkulls, which they pretend were formerly thoſe of their moſt eminent ſaints and martyrs; they are not however *incorruptible*, but are beginning to decay very faſt, and exhibit an exceeding

ghaſtly

ghaſtly appearance. When we returned to Mr Biſſet's, we received another viſit from Don Henriquez and his ſiſter Donna Helena de Correya, and then dined with Mr and Mrs Lynch.

Wedneſday we went to ſee a grand proceſſion in honour of St Francis, and afterwards took a walk in Donna Guiomar's vineyards; in the evening Mr Biſſet gave us a ball.

Thurſday morning, we called on Donna Helena, and dined with a large party at Mr Lacock's; we had a ball and concert in the afternoon. Madeira, were it properly cultivated, might juſtly be termed the garden of the world; the ſerenity of the climate, the fertility of the ſoil, every thing conſpire to render it an abſolute terreſtrial paradiſe; and it only requires the nurturing hand of art to give the finiſhing touches to a ſcene on which nature has ſo profuſely poured her choiceſt treaſures. The ſcorching heat of ſummer, and the icy chill of winter are here equally unknown; but ſpring and autumn reign

together,

together, and produce flowers and fruit throughout the year.

Ripe fruits and bloſſoms on the ſame tree live,
At once they promiſe what at once they give.

— WALLER.

This deſirable iſland is reported to have been diſcovered by an Engliſhman, Captain Maſham, in or about the year 1344, and was conquered by the Portugueſe (under whoſe government it ſtill remains) in 1437. They ſet fire to the foreſts, which burned for a conſiderable time, and gave the ſoil that degree of fertility which it boaſts of at preſent.

Friday morning, we made a party to aſcend the mountain and to view the country; we found the aſcent very ſteep; but were amply repaid for our fatigues by the charms of the proſpect, which exhibits a continual ſucceſſion of vineyards that flouriſh in the utmoſt perfection. The vines are trained and ſupported by poles, which form rows

rows of colonades and arches to the ſummit of the mountain; the vines twining their flexible branches in arbours over head, and forming an umbrage impervious to the rays of the ſun.

Here order'd vines in equal ranks appear,
With all th' united labours of the year;
Some to unload the fertile branches run,
Some dry the black'ning cluſters in the ſun;
Others to tread the liquid harveſts join,
The groaning preſſes foam with floods of wine;
Here are the vines in early flower deſcried,
Here grapes diſcolour'd on the ſunny ſide,
And there in autumn's richeſt purple dy'd.

HOMER's Odyſſey.

This iſland abounds in every kind of Tropical and European fruits; as oranges, lemons of a prodigious ſize, bananas, citrons, peaches, figs, plumbs, and ſtrawberries that grow wild in the mountains with aſtoniſhing profuſion; grapes which are as large as our common plumbs, and remarkable for their peculiar flavour; the oran-

ges,

ges here are of a ſanguine red. This ſpecies is produced from the common orange bud ingrafted on the pomegranate ſtock. There is likewiſe a kind of pear found here, not bigger than a walnut, and very criſp. The ſugar cane alſo is cultivated with ſome ſucceſs, though not in any conſiderable quantity. The cedar tree is found in great abundance; it is extremely beautiful; moſt of the ceilings and furniture at Madeira are made of that wood, which yields a very fragrant ſmell. The dragon tree is a native of this iſland. Flowers nurſed in the Engliſh green-houſes grow wild here in the fields; the hedges are moſtly formed of myrtle, roſes, jeſſamine, and honeyſuckle in everlaſting bloſſom, while the larkſpur, the fleur-de-lis, the lupin, &c. ſpring up ſpontaneouſly in the meadows, and form a thouſand natural parterres of embroidery. There are very few reptiles to be ſeen in the iſland; the lizard is the moſt common. Canary birds and goldfinches are found in the mountains; of the former numbers are ſent every year to England.

But to return to my journal. After we had proceeded about half way up the mountain, we found a little hermitage, ſituated on the brow of a hill, and dug out of the ſolid rock; it is hung round with ivy, and conſiſts of two apartments or caves, in which the embowering trees around reflect a gloomy ſhade; by the ſide of it is a fountain, with a Triton in the midſt that throws water from a conque ſhell to an amazing height, and forms an artificial *jet-d'eau*.

We then viſited the ſeat of Mr Murray, the Engliſh conſul. The houſe is neat; but, for the gardens, I doubt whether thoſe of Alcinous ſurpaſſed them; every tree and flowering ſhrub the iſland affords are here aſſembled and diſpoſed with the moſt exquiſite taſte, and with a wildneſs that leaves you in doubt whether it is the work of art or nature: A fountain guſhes from the ſide of a rock, which forms itſelf into a thouſand different ſhapes, ſometimes rolling down the hill in caſcades, then gliding like a rivulet among the ſhrubs, or ſpreading a limpid ſheet of

of water over a verdant carpet enamelled with flowers.

We dined at a country-houſe of Mr Lacock's. Moſt of the merchants have little cottages on the ſlope of the hill, ſurrounded with gardens and vine-yards, which have a very pleaſing effect in the landſcape. We proceeded in the evening to the ſummit of the mountain, on which is a magnifi-cent church, dedicated to the Virgin, whoſe image is yearly carried about in proceſſion through the iſland to viſit the ſick; and I was aſſured that it conſtantly performed the moſt *miraculous cures*. We were fortunate enough to viſit this church on the eve of a feſtival, and found it filled with young girls, who were buſily employed in deck-ing the altars with wreaths of flowers, and crown-ing the waxen images of the Virgin and Child with chaplets of myrtle and roſes. The church is ſurrounded with a triple row of ſmall cannon, eight or nine inches long. At ſun ſet a ſignal was given, and, after the evening ſervice to the Virgin was chanted, they were diſcharged with

a running fire; the reports followed each other with prodigious rapidity, and the mountain echoes multiplying and prolonging the ſounds, gave it the grandeſt effect imaginable.

Saturday evening we paid our devoirs to Don Diego the governor, and his lady Donna Louiſa, who entertained us with an elegant ball and a concert.—On Sunday, Mr and Mrs Lynch, Mrs Achmuty, Mr Maſterton, and Mr Caſey, ſpent the afternoon, and drank tea with us.

Monday, we called to take leave of Donna Helena de Correya, and her brother. I regretted the company of the former extremely; ſhe was one of the loveliеſt and moſt amiable girls I ever converſed with. We then took a walk through the town, and viſited the ſhops, which are very indifferent: The natives are, however, remarkably ingenious, and famous for their ſkill in making perfume, paſtes, &c. The Portugueſe are extremely dark complexioned, but have fine eyes and teeth; the women are in general handſome;

ſome; the lower claſs of people here are indolent, dirty, and much addicted to theft; they are very muſical, and extremely gallant. You ſeldom paſs a night at Madeira without hearing a ſerenade of guitars and mandolines in ſome part of the ſtreet.

I had the curioſity, during my ſtay on this iſland, to aſſiſt at one of their funerals; the ceremony of which did not a little diſguſt and ſurpriſe me. The corpſe was carried by porters in an open hammock, dreſſed out in a moſt fantaſtic manner; and, as ſoon as it was brought within the church, the bones of the deceaſed were all broken one after another, the body careleſsly thrown into the ground without a coffin, and the hole filled up with large ſtones.

Tueſday, May the 6th, we took leave of our hoſt Mr Biſſet, from whom we received the greateſt civility and attention, and embarked again with our former party on board the Britannia. At four o'clock we weighed anchor, and ſet ſail with a fair wind for the iſland of St Chriſtopher's.

A

VOYAGE

TO THE

ISLAND OF ST CHRISTOPHER'S.

1788.

A

VOYAGE

TO

St CHRISTOPHER's.

ABOUT a week after our departure from the Madeiras, we got into the trade winds, and, on the 13th of May, we paſſed the Tropic of Cancer. We now began to ſee a variety of Tropic birds and flying-fiſhes; the latter generally appear early in the morning to avoid the piercing rays of the meridian ſun, which, by quickly drying their wings, conſiderably impedes their flight; for the pinions, when they loſe their moiſture, no longer retain the faculty of tranſporting the animal through the air: Some-

times

times they are ſeen ſoaring high above the ſhip, and then again ſkimming the ſurface of the water with their tranſparent wings. The phaenomenon of the luminous ſea, well known to naturaliſts, is almoſt conſtantly obſerved in this part of the ocean; its appearance is as beautiful as it is extraordinary: The prow of the ſhip, when it glides with velocity through the water, ſcatters around the foam, and caſts a ſudden ray like lightening, that forms a ſemicircle round the veſſel; the track or furrow made by the rudder is perfectly luminous; the ſea itſelf is ſtudded with myriads of little radiant ſtars or dots of azure and gold, and, if the night prove remarkably dark, you fancy yourſelf ſailing through an ocean of liquid fire. The weather was ſo calm, that, during the whole voyage, we never had occaſion to take in our royals but once. We ſpoke ſeveral Eaſt Indiamen; and, ſoon after we left Madeira, were chaced by an Algerine, who did not give up his purſuit till we happened to fall in with another Engliſh ſhip, when the Corſair, fearful of encountering a force ſo much ſuperior

to

to his own, gave up the chace, after having driven us a little out of our courſe to the eaſtward; which, however, was not to be regretted, as it gave us an opportunity of ſeeing, though at a great diſtance, the famous Peak of Teneriffe.

On Saturday the 31ſt, we paſſed the iſlands of Deſaracta, Guadeloupe, and Antigua; and, on Sunday morning our ſhip ſtruck upon a coral rock juſt under the lee of Nevis. The ſhock was far more violent than any earthquake I ever experienced; but we ſuſtained very little damage, and found ourſelves in deep water again almoſt as ſoon as we heard the craſh.

We landed that day (the 1ſt of June) at Baſſe-terre in the iſland of St Chriſtopher's.—This iſland, diſcovered by and named after Chriſtopher Columbus, is ſituated in 17 deg. 15 min. N. Lat. and 63 deg. 17 min. W. Long. It is about twenty miles in breadth, and ſeven in length, and divided into nine pariſhes, viz. St George and St Peter, Baſſe-Terre; St Mary, Cayon;

Cayon; Chriſt-church, Nichola-town; St John and St Paul, Cabeſterre; St Anne, Sandy Point; St Thomas, Middle Iſland; and Trinity, Palmeto Point.

A ridge of mountains runs through the iſland, declining each way towards the ſea, ſo that there is ſcarcely a ſpot of level ground (of any extent at leaſt) in St Kitt's. The higheſt of this chain of hills is called *Mount Miſery*, the ſummit of which is loſt in the clouds, and viſible only in an uncommonly clear day; ſometimes the whole of it is concealed by a veil of bluiſh vapours that encircle it all round like a girdle; but, when entirely diveſted of fogs and miſts, it certainly exhibits one of the moſt majeſtic objects the eye can behold. In the year 1787, three hardy Scotſmen boldly adventured to explore this mountain, which till that time was reckoned inacceſſible. They proceeded, as juſtly as they could aſcertain, to the height of 3711 feet, by faſtening ropes to the branches of trees, and the craggy points of the rocks, and climbing thus, with

with a thouſand hazards and difficulties, till they found it taper to a pinnacle of one immenſe ſolid rock; at the foot of which they erected a flag-ſtaff, (which is now viſible in a clear day with a teleſcope) and here concluded their perilous undertaking, finding it totally impoſſible to aſcend any higher.—An immenſe crater ſinks near 1000 feet almoſt perpendicular in this mountain, the bottom of which is nearly level, and may contain about fifty acres, ſeven of which conſiſt of a lake or baſon of rain-water; the reſt is moſtly covered with graſs nearly ſix feet high, and trees, among which the delicious mountain cabbage is found in great abundance. To the north of this valley are ſix diſtinct cones, or hillocks, near 100 feet in height, and compoſed of lava, pumice, and a very fat argillaceous earth. The feeble remains of this tremendous volcano burſts out in as many mouths, and a ſtream of water, which takes its riſe higher up the ſide of the grand crater, is partly abſorbed in the chaſms, and thrown out with a furious boiling noiſe and ſteam. Tetrahoedral chryſtals of ſulphur, alum

in

in an efflorescent appearance, and likewise mineralized with iron, are abundant in the crannies of these little hills, and a very pure argillaceous and magnesian earth are to be found in great quantities; the water which springs here is much impregnated with alum and vitriolic acid; but, except a martial pyrites, no mineral is observed. Calcined lava, and the lava informis of Linnaeus, are the only ones commonly seen, though a species of petroleum, or jet, has been found mixed with a hard stone of the calcareous kind, but very rarely. The thermometer generally at 212. of Fahrenheit's scale in the fissures of the Solfaterra.

It is impossible to describe the various scenes and views these mountains exhibit, as the landscape never continues the same for the space of two miles; in some places, you see nothing but vast rocks, high precipices, and frightful caverns; in others, deep vales, and hanging woods; and then the eye is caught from these to the more pleasing views of rich pastures, grazing cattle, and little gardens dispersed on the slopes of the hill.

hill. Moſt of the inhabitnts at St Kitt's have ſmall cottages, where they remain during the hot months; ſome of theſe are ſituated ſo high in the mountains, that I have frequently heard the thunder growl, and ſeen the lightening dart from the clouds that rolled beneath the windows, while the atmoſphere above was pure and ſerene.

In the rainy ſeaſon (at the latter end of autumn) the cataracts are ſeen deſcending in vaſt torrents from the ſummits of theſe mountains, rolling their ſeveral ſtreams, ſometimes near half a mile in breadth, with aſtoniſhing rapidity, and ſweeping all before them; the havock they make is incredible; indeed a great part of the iſland is entirely ploughed up in gullies and channels formed at different times by theſe impetuous deſtroyers.

Abundance of fine ſpring water is procured at St Kitt's, a convenience not met with in many of the other Leeward Iſlands. Theſe ſprings take their ſource in the mountains, and their courſe

is directed by leaden pipes, that guide them down to the ſeveral eſtates ſituated at the baſe of the hill.

The chief town in St Chriſtopher's is Baſſeterre, which is ſituated in the beautiful valley from whence it derives its name. Here the courts of juſtice are held, and all the public buſineſs of the iſland is tranſacted. Baſſeterre, including Iriſhtown, which adjoins it to the weſtward, conſiſts of 800 houſes. The ſtreets are rather narrow, without any pavement either for carriages or foot-paſſengers. The lands a little above the town riſe gradually towards the mountains; the view of that part of the iſland from the ſea is extremely beautiful, as the various plantations in the valley, with the buildings and trees about them, appear to great advantage.

Eaſtward of the valley of Baſſeterre there is a ridge of hills three miles in length, and near the extremity of them the ſalt-ponds are ſituated. In very dry ſeaſons near 100,000 buſhels of ſalt are

are collected, which not only ſupplies the inhabitants of the iſland, but large quantities are alſo exported to America. The heat of the ſun in this climate produces the effect of cryſtallizing the ſalt. Ponds, full 400 yards in diameter, become one entire cruſt of ſalt ſeveral inches thick; it is found adhering in brittle maſſes of a white pellucid nature, as beautiful and diaphanous as rock chryſtal: The ſmell of theſe ſalt ponds is inſufferable at particular ſeaſons of the year, and is reckoned prejudicial to the health; the eſtates that adjoin them are uſually ſickly; and the ſoil of that diſtrict is unfruitful.

There is a beautiful little village, four or five miles from Baſſeterre, called *Cayon*: It is picturesquely ſituated on the brow of a hill, with a fine ſtreamlet of water running through it, which ſupplies the whole of that diſtrict.

About eleven miles from Cayon is another village, called *Dieppe-bay*; and beyond that, at a little diſtance only, lies the town of Sandy Point,

which contains 300 houſes. Near this lies the celebrated fortreſs of Brimſtone-Hill, from the ſummit of which you have the fineſt view imaginable, and the ſea almoſt waſhes the foot of it. I viſited Brimſtone-Hill in the autumn of 1789. The 9th regiment of foot was then ſtationed there, and artificers of various kinds were employed about the fortifications. General Mathews had juſt laid the foundation-ſtone of Fort-George. Six miles from Baſſeterre, on the S. W. ſide of the iſland, is a village called *Old Road*, conſiſting of about 100 houſes, which are ſhaded by a vaſt number of fine tamarind trees; two rivulets of clear water run through the ſtreet, and largely ſupply the whole of that diſtrict, which is undoubtedly the moſt agreeable in the iſland.

As for the quadrupeds, &c. found in St Kitt's, they being for the moſt part the ſame as thoſe of Antigua, I ſhall refer the reader to my ſketch of the natural hiſtory of that iſland, and content myſelf with particulariſing, in this place, thoſe animals only which are indigenous in St Chriſtopher's, and not found in Antigua.

I recollect none at preſent except the monkey; abundance of theſe miſchievous creatures inhabit the High-lands, and frequently come down in large companies among the canes, where they create inconceivable miſchief and damage.

The birds are much the ſame here as in Antigua, and all the amphibious animals, one ſpecies of the lizard excepted: This reptile (*lacerta viridis, capite rubro*) differs nowiſe from the others, except about the head, which is always of a bright flame colour, and very beautiful: I never knew of this particularity being obſerved among lizards in any of the Caribbee Iſlands except St Kitt's.

During my reſidence in the Weſt Indies, I had ſeveral times the pleaſure of ſeeing the phenomenon of a water-ſpout. Its appearance is thus: "You firſt obſerve the clouds extremely "agitated, upon which they aſſume a ſable hue, "and appear as if hurried by a whirlwind, while "a rumbling noiſe proceeds from that part of

" the heavens, the wind blowing from ſeveral " quarters, and the ſkies much ruffled. Its firſt " appearance is in the form of a deep cloud, the " upper part whereof is white and the lower " black, from which falls the ſpout like a coni- " cal tube, biggeſt at top, and gradually di- " miniſhing to a point. Under this tube the ſea " boils, and throws itſelf into various forms, fly- " ing, foaming, riſing, and falling alternately, " and a pillar of water riſes in the middle, crown- " ed with a vapour of a faint violet colour. At " the baſe of this column the ſea frothing and " curling appears white as ſnow, and a vortex or " whirlpool is formed at ſome diſtance round *."

The water-ſpout ſometimes ruſhes forward thro' the element, ploughing up the water, and overwhelming all that croſſes its paſſage; ſometimes it advances to the ſhore, tearing and ravaging every thing before it; and breaks with a tremendous noiſe among the rocks, bearing back with it to the ocean houſes, cattle, or whatever happens to intercept its way.

* Vide Encyclopaedia.

A

TOUR

THROUGH

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA.

1790.

A

TOUR

THROUGH

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA.

I EMBARKED the 1ſt of February 1790, from Baſſe-terre, on board the Blanche, a 32 gun frigate, then commiſſioned to the Leeward Iſland ſtation, and commanded by Captain Murray. My father, mother, brother, and three gentlemen from Antigua, compoſed our party. We ſailed firſt to Nevis, and anchored there, where however I did not land. This iſland does not exhibit by any means ſo intereſting a landſcape as St Kitt's. A mountain, ſhaped like a ſugar-loaf, riſes in the middle, whoſe ſummit is totally

totally obſcured in the clouds; but the houſes, plantations, ſugar-works, &c. diſperſed on its declivity, give it a very pleaſing appearance. Charleſtown is prettily ſituated along the ſea coaſt. We left Nevis in the evening, and weighed anchor for Antigua. We paſſed the iſland of Redondo about midnight; and the next day the wind blew very hard, and directly contrary. Wedneſday morning, however, it abated, and we paſſed Montſerrat and Sandy Iſland, and anchored in St John's Bay, Antigua. We landed about one o'clock, and went immediately to the houſe of Mr Byam in Popeſhead.

We ſpent that week in viſiting different parts of the iſland; and, Tueſday the 9th, we embarked from Parham in a ſmall ſchooner, and weighed anchor at half paſt ten for the iſland of Barbuda. We arrived there in a few hours, after a moſt unpleaſant navigation; the ſea was extremely rough; our little veſſel pitched terribly, and the waves were every inſtant beating over her deck. We managed, however, to throw

throw out our fiſhing tackle, and to catch two young dolphins. The inſtant they were taken, they wreathed themſelves about in various ſhapes, and ſwelled their lucid ſcales, that inſtantly aſſumed the moſt brilliant colouring imaginable, diſplaying alternately the gloſſy tints of the ſapphire, the emerald, the topaz, the amethyſt, and the brighteſt violet colour ornamented with ſtreaks of gold, ſilver, and azure. Theſe vary ſucceſſively, and with ſuch rapidity, that the eye can ſcarcely diſtinguiſh one before another enſues. Barbuda is ſo fenced round with rocks and ſhoals, that, except in one or two places, it is totally inacceſſible, and the wrecks it occaſions are innumerable. We landed at the Fort, within a league of which the navigation is extremely dangerous, but at the ſame time the moſt beautiful that can be imagined. The water is ſhallow, and ſo perfectly tranſparent, that the rocks underneath it are entirely viſible; they are ſown ſo thick that there is but juſt room for a ſmall veſſel to paſs between them; ſome are raiſed above the ſurface of the ſea, (which is

white

white with foam from continually breaking againſt them) and covered with moſs, ſea-weeds, ſhells, and corals. It is ſure deſtruction to all veſſels beyond a certain magnitude to approach them. Our ſchooner (the ſteerſman being accuſtomed to it) thread them regularly through, going in zig-zags all the way; but we could eaſily touch the rocks on each ſide of us with a ſtick. We found ſome chaiſes on the beach ready to convey us to Mr Reynold's houſe, where we were joined next day by a large party from Antigua.

The iſland of Barbuda is 20 miles in length, and 12 in breadth, ſituated in 61 deg. 50 min. W. long. and 17 deg. 42 min. N. lat. It is the property of government, but has for many years been leaſed out to the Codrington family. This iſland being low and flat, is not healthy at all ſeaſons of the year. There are no hills or mountains in it; but towards the middle of it the ground gently riſes in a gradual ſwell: This they call the High-lands, and on them Sir William Codrington's

Codrington's manager Mr Reynolds's houſe is ſituated. The air here is much more ſalubrious than in the lowlands, and from hence you have a fine view of the adjacent country. The whole iſland is covered with woodlands; but, as the ſoil is no where more than ſix inches deep, there is of courſe no timber of any conſiderable ſize. The inhabitants are black, moſtly ſlaves to Sir William Codrington; their employment is huſbandry. The ſugar cane does not flouriſh here in any perfection. The chief commodity, from which the owner derives any benefit, is the cattle, which breed wild among the woods, and ſell to prodigious advantage in the neighbouring Carribbean iſles.

Thurſday morning, we took a ride to ſee the iſland, and viſited the Caſtle, which is in the lowlands. It is a kind of ruin, formerly built to defend the iſland againſt the invaſions of the Caribs, who frequently came in their canoes to plunder it, and carry away the cattle, &c.

Friday morning we were conducted to the banks of a river or lake of ſalt-water, where we embarked in a barge, with a canopy over our heads to ſhield us from the ſun; and, after ſailing about half an hour, the moſt enchanting proſpect imagination can paint diſcloſed itſelf to our view. From this lake iſſues on each ſide a thouſand little branches, that diffuſe themſelves through the country in various meanders, and whoſe banks are bordered with tufts of mangrove trees; theſe trees flouriſh only in marſhy ſituations, and by the ſea, or any ſtream of ſalt water; out of their ſpreading branches iſſue a number of ſmall filaments that deſcend and penetrate into the earth, take root, and riſe again above ground, ſhooting forth into new branches and leaves. Thus a ſingle mangrove tree can in time produce a whole foreſt. The bark is made into ropes, and the ſmall filaments can be beat into threads as fine as flax. Theſe mangroves have the thickeſt foliage imaginable, and a moſt lovely verdure; the effect they produce by the ſide of the lake is beautiful beyond deſcription; the

trees

trees grow close to each other, and rise to a vast height, yet bending over their flexible and delicate branches to kiss the stream from whence they derive their luxuriance. Towards the extremities of these branches the oyster (that derives its name from the tree) deposits her spawn; and the shells, as they grow to their natural size, twist themselves round the branch in such a manner, and adhere so forcibly to it, that it is impossible to pick off the oyster without tearing the bark along with it. They are found by hundreds at a time, suspended in prodigious clusters, some above, and some below the surface of the water.

After sailing about two hours, we found ourselves at the opposite side of the lake, on a narrow neck of land bounded by the sea, where we spent the day in a little cottage, shaded by a tuft of cocoa trees, within thirty yards of a sea-beach enamelled with shells. About half a league from this neck of land, a prodigious high reef of rocks runs along for several miles, over which

the ſea breaks with a tremendous noiſe, and daſhing its foaming billows to a vaſt height; but they ſeem to exhauſt their force and fury againſt the points of the rocks; for, as ſoon as it paſſes them, the ſea becomes as ſmooth as glaſs, and, after the moſt gradual approaches, gently bathes the roots of the ever verdant mangrove trees that border the ſhore. From hence too we ſaw the hulks of ſeveral ſhips that had been wrecked on this reef. They were inhabited by a numerous tribe of pelicans; I believe we did not ſee leſs than forty or fifty of thoſe enormous birds perched on different parts of the hulk, and ſitting to watch their finny prey.

After dinner we again croſſed the lake in our little barge, and returned to our apartments in the High-lands. Saturday we rode to ſee a remarkable tree of the Eaſt India banian ſpecies; a prodigious number of filaments, ſomewhat like thoſe of the mangrove, deſcend from its branches, which are of an amazing thickneſs; they penetrate into the ground, riſe again, and twiſt round

the

the branch, forming thus a number of fine arcades from ſix to ten feet in height all round the body of the tree. They are cloſely entwined with each other, and give the idea of a number of little cabinets or alcoves of different ſizes, according to the height of and diſtance between the branches. The vaſt foliage over the arcades affords ſo delightful an umbrage that a large company may dine under its ſhade. The roots of this prodigious tree extend their fibres over ten acres of land.

Sunday morning we were entertained with the diverſion of a wild bull hunt, which we ſaw very diſtinctly from a ſmall eminence that commanded an extenſive view of the adjacent lowlands where the animal was rouſed. The hunters were a family of Caribs, who from their childhood had been accuſtomed to that exerciſe; they purſued the bull mounted on horſes trained for the purpoſe, without any ſaddle, and nothing but a ſtring in their mouths to guide them through the mazes of the woods; each hunter

was armed with a ſpear, and they were accompanied by a parcel of fierce bull-dogs, who, after a chace of two hours, faſtened on the wearied animal, that made the whole country echo with his roarings, and pinned him to the ground, till the hunters arrived, and ſtruck him dead with a hatchet.

Wild deer breed abundantly among the woods at Barbuda; but they prove but indifferent veniſon, owing to the poorneſs of the paſtures.

On Monday we rode to ſee a ſpacious cavern, which is ſituated on the eaſtern ſide of the iſland. It is of a circular ſhape, and near eighty feet in depth; there is no water in it, although it appears to be conſiderably lower than the level of the ſea. Whether this cavern was formerly the mouth of an extinguiſhed volcano, (which I do not think probable, as there is no appearance of pumex nor veſtiges of fire about it) or from what it derives its origin, no one has yet been able to aſcertain. In ſome places the

water

water filtering through the pores of the vaſt rocks, that bend in gloomy arches over head, form a great number of ſtalactites, which are ſuſpended from the roof and down the ſides of the cavern, and produce a beautiful effect. The rains continually waſhing down the mold, &c. into the bottom, have formed a thick rich ſoil there, in which a number of lofty trees flouriſh with great luxuriance; and the prodigious number of wild deer and goats, who make this receſs their aſylum, add conſiderably to its fertilization, by the quantity of manure they afford. The cavern is divided into two diſtinct apartments by a verdant curtain of vines, which runs exactly through the middle of it; and, having now ſubſiſted many years there, has gradually crept up and faſtened its topmoſt branches to the pinnacles of the rocks that form the circumference of the cave. The extreme thickneſs of this curtain, and the refreſhing verdure of the cluſtering foliage make it one of the moſt grateful objects (eſpecially in this climate) that can be imagined.

On Wedneſday the 17th, we left Barbuda, and returned to Antigua; and, on Sunday the 21ſt, we came back again to the iſland of St Chriſtopher's.

GEOGRA-

GEOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTION

AND

NATURAL HISTORY

OF

ANTIGUA.

1791.

GEOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTION

OF

ANTIGUA.

To me be Nature's volume broad-diſplay'd,
And to peruſe its all-inſtructing page,
Or, haply catching inſpiration thence,
Some eaſy paſſage, raptur'd, to tranſlate,
My ſole delight.—THOMSON.

THE iſland of Antigua (formerly named by the Spaniards Santa Maria l'Antigua, after the famous church of that name in Seville) is 16 miles in length, and 10½ in breadth. It is ſituated in 62 deg. 3 min. W. long. and 17 deg. 4 min. N. lat. It is laid out in 14 diviſions, viz. St John's, Five Iſlands, New Diviſion, Bermudian Valley, Old Road, Rendezvous Bay, Falmouth, Willoughby Bay, Nonſuch, Belfaſt, Old North

North Sound, New North Sound, Popeſhead, and Dickenſon's Bay; and contains ſix pariſhes, viz. St John's, St Peter's, St Philip's, St Mary's, St Paul's, and St George's.

The landſcapes of Antigua are greatly inferior in point of beauty to thoſe of the neighbouring Carribbean Iſles, from its being leſs mountainous than almoſt any of them. About the diviſions of Old Road and Bermudian Valley, the lands are very hilly, and ſometimes ſteep, but the reſt of the iſland is flat, and only riſes every now and then in gentle ſwells. A number of ſprings and ſtreamlets are diſperſed about the country, but (one or two ſmall ones excepted) they are all brackiſh, and ſtrongly impregnated with the foſſile alkali, conſequently of no manner of uſe. The want of freſh water here is often very great; for all that can be procured is the rain water preſerved in tanks and ciſterns; and, in dry ſeaſons, the inhabitants are even diſtreſſed for that. In the year 1789, there was no fall of rain for ſeven months, which not only

only ruined the crop of ſugar, but 5000 head of horned cattle periſhed for want of drink.

The chief town in Antigua is St John's. It is one of the largeſt and moſt handſome in the Weſt Indies. The ſtrects are wide and well laid out, and the houſes moſtly commodious and airy. The church is placed on an eminence almoſt in the middle of the town; it is ſpacious, and ornamented with great elegance. The court-houſe, where the council and aſſembly ſit to tranſact the legiſlative affairs of the iſland, is a very handſome edifice. A little above the town is a neat range of buildings, which are the barracks appropriated to the uſe of the military corps commiſſioned to this iſland, and are extenſive enough to contain three regiments.

Antigua being the ſeat of government, a place called Clark's Hill (about five miles from St John's) is kept up at the expence of the legiſlature, where the commander in chief always reſides. Four ſmall villages, viz. Parham, Bridge-

town, Falmouth, and Old Road, are diſperſed in different parts of the country; but none of them are very populous. There is a fortification in Falmouth diviſion called Monk's-hill; it was raiſed by the firſt coloniſts as a retreat in caſe of an inſurrection among the Negroes. Engliſh Harbour (which is alſo in Falmouth diviſion) is ſurrounded with hills, on the ſummits of which various forts and redouts are raiſed, with barracks that will contain three regiments, magazines, ſtorehouſes, &c. for the accommodation of troops, built in a moſt expenſive ſtile, and extremely commodious: The whole goes under the name of the *Ridge*, from the ſituation on which the buildings are erected.

Engliſh Harbour is the principal naval dock-yard in the Leeward Iſlands. It is ſituated on the ſouth ſide of the iſland, and is capable of containing fourteen or fifteen men of war, five of which can heave down at once; the entrance is only deep enough for a ſixty-four gun ſhip; larger ones muſt take their guns out before they

can

can come in; it is extremely narrow, and a ſhip requires the aſſiſtance of ſeveral anchors and warps to bring her to her birth. The piles on which the wharfs are built are all of hard wood caſed with copper, and coſt immenſe ſums of money to government. The ſtorehouſes, maſt-houſes, &c. are built on an elegant plan, and very well executed.

Half a mile weſt of Engliſh Harbour lies Falmouth Harbour, which is juſt deep enough in one place for ſmall trading ſhips, that come in there to deliver ſtores for his Majeſty's dock-yard; for Engliſh Harbour is not open to any craft but what belongs to the King.

St John's Harbour is the principal trading port. The road weſt of James Fort has good anchorage and depth of water. At the mouth of the harbour is a bar, with only thirteen feet water at low ebb. Large merchant-ſhips complete their loading in the road, which is two miles from the town wharfs; but the harbour is only three-

fourths of a mile: It is capable of holding 300 ſail of merchant-ſhips. The men of war lie in the road ſouth of the merchant-ſhips, between Goat Hill and James Fort; the road is difficult of acceſs, and requires the ſteerage of ſkilful pilots. The Diamond Rock lies at the diſtance of two leagues N. W. of James Fort. The Warrington Rock, and the Two Siſters are W. and by N. at the diſtance of two miles only; and Sandy Iſland, which is above water, is five miles off to the S. W. the N. ſide of the iſland, and the ſouth-weſt, and begirt with coral rocks, interſected with channels of various depths, known only to a few; conſequently Antigua owes her ſafety from invaſion more to her natural fortifications than to any reſources of art.

SKETCH

SKETCH

OF THE

NATURAL HISTORY OF ANTIGUA.

QUADRUPEDS†.

DIV. I.—*Hoofed Quadrupeds.*

Section I.—*Whole Hoofed.*

The breed of Antigua *horſes* is ſmall and active; they are ſometimes tolerably handſome. *Aſſes* are very ſcarce in this iſland. *Mules* are bred and imported here in great numbers; they are extremely ſerviceable, and much employed for draught, and for labouring the eſtates.

Sect. II.—*Cloven Hoofed.*

The *oxen* here are as much employed for the ſervice of the eſtates as mules. *Milch cows* are

† Claſſed according to Pennant's Syſtem.

ſo ſcarce, and the milk they yield ſo poor, that very few people are enabled to make freſh butter; and in general the milk of the ſheep and goats is thought preferable to that of the cows.

The *ſheep* ſoon loſe their woolly fleece in this climate: Providence has clothed them with a lank brown hair inſtead; which, though it diminiſhes their beauty, is infinitely more ſerviceable to them in point of coolneſs. The breed of *goats* is propagated here with great ſucceſs, eſpecially by the Negroes; as they conſtitute a very conſiderable part of the ſtock they are allowed to raiſe for their own profit. There are two different ſpecies of *hogs* in this iſland; the one much reſembling in form the wild boar, which was the original breed left here by the Spaniards; the other is the common European hog.

Div. II.—*Digitated Quadrupeds.*

A breed of *wild cats* ſubſiſts in the woods here; they are twice the ſize of the domeſtic cat,

cat, and frequently carry off the young lambs and kids. They are very uſeful however in deſtroying the numerous tribe of *rats* that infeſt the cane lands. Their fur is extremely fine. The Negroes ſell it for a ſhilling a ſkin; they kill them to eat their fleſh, which they regard as a great dainty. A beautiful ſpecies of *rat* is found both in St Kitt's and Antigua. It is ſhaped like the common rat, but its fur is exceſſively fine, and as white and ſpotleſs as ermine: Several of them have been caught in traps and cages; but their nature is ſo fierce, that it is found impoſſible to tame them.

The *agouti* is found in Antigua. It is a ſmall animal, of the mouſe ſpecies, but as large as a rabbit, and of a dun colour; it burrows in the ground, and feeds upon wild fruits, &c. The *opoſſum* (called by Linnaeus the *didelphis marſupialis*) is likewiſe found here. It is of the ſize of a domeſtic cat; its ſhape ſomewhat reſembles a weaſel; the noſe is long, and not unlike that of a hog; the ears round, ſhort, erect, and tipt

with

with black; the legs are ſhort, and generally of that colour likewiſe; the fur is of a greyiſh brown; beneath the belly hangs a looſe ſkin like a bag, which the opoſſum can dilate and contract at pleaſure, and in which it ſecures its young ones when alarmed or purſued by the hunters. When the dogs approach, it feigns death, and, by that means, is ſure to eſcape, as the canine race do not prey upon its fleſh, but only hunt it out of wantonneſs. The breed however is almoſt extinct here; and the opoſſum is very ſcarce in Antigua.

Div. III.—*Pinnated Quadrupeds.*

Div. IV.—*Winged Quadrupeds.*

Two ſpecies of *bats* are found here, the one with, and the other without, tails.

BIRDS.

BIRDS†.

Div. I.—*Land Birds.*

Order I.—*Rapacious.*

Few of the feathered race comprehended under this order are found in Antigua; the *ſea falcon*, and two kinds of *hawks*. The *ſparrow-hawk* is extremely beautiful, but very deſtructive to poultry and all kinds of ſmaller birds.

Order II.—*Pies.*

Two kinds of *orioles*, two ſorts of *king'sfiſhers*, the *creeper*, and two ſpecies of the *humming bird* or *honeyſucker*, are found in Antigua; the *trochilus mellivorus*, and the *trochilus polytmus* (of Linnaeus); neither of them is much larger than a common butterfly, and they are both beautiful beyond

† Claſſed according to Pennant's Syſtem.

beyond deſcription. The plumage of the humming bird, when expanded in the ſun, exhibits all the lucid tints of the rainbow; the head, neck, and back, are of a reſplendent variable green and gold; the wings azure; the breaſt and tail of a ſapphire blue; a ſparkling creſt, that might be miſtaken for a poliſhed emerald, riſes on the head of the trochilus polytmus, which is much ſmaller than the other kind, and infinitely more beautiful; the bill of the humming bird is near an inch long, curved, black, and poliſhed like ebony; the tongue is cylindrical, and much longer than the bill; it ſerves as a trunk to extract the honied eſſences lodged in the nectaria of flowers; for this bird ſubſiſts entirely by ſuction; the eyes, from their colour and brilliancy, reſemble two beads of poliſhed ſteel. They fly with extreme ſwiftneſs, and the wings, as they cut the air, make a noiſe like the buzzing of an humble bee, but much louder; the motion of the wings is ſo rapid as even to be perfectly imperceptible. The humming birds are fearleſs of mankind; they will ſuffer you to approach

proach close to them while they remain suspended under a blossom to extract its aromatic juices. This little wonder of nature is perhaps one of the boldest of the feathered race; it frequently attacks, and never fails of defeating, any plumed adversary, however superior in strength and size. The weapon it employs on these occasions is its bill, which is sharp and pointed like a needle; it plunges it either in the enemy's eye, or the fleshy part under his wing. The nest is of an hemispherical shape, and wove with cotton, which they pick from the pods, when split open by the sun; they fasten it to the bough of a tree by drawing a few threads round it, and cementing them with a little odoriferous gum drawn from the flowers. The outside is generally fortified with a few citron or orange leaves, twined in with the cotton. It is doubtful whether the mechanism of this nest, or its admirable architects, are most worthy of admiration. The humming bird lays two eggs, each the size of a large pea.

Order

Order III.—*Gallinaceous.*

The *turkey*, the *African Guinea bird*, and the *quail*, are found here.

Order IV.—*Columbine.*

Five kinds of *doves* are natives of Antigua, of which the *ramier* and the *ground dove* are the moſt beautiful. The latter is about the ſize of a lark, the wings of a bright roſe colour, and the neck and breaſt of a variable purple and gold.

Order V.—*Paſſerine.*

The *thruſh*, the *green bunting*, the *wagtail*, the *Jamaica* and the *three coloured finch*, are likewiſe found in this iſland; alſo the *yellow breaſt* and the *ſparrow.*

Div. II.—*Water Birds.*

Order VI.—*Cloven-footed, or Waders.*

The *curlew*, the *ſnipe*, the *plover*, the *yellow-legs*, the *redſhank*, the *ſand-piper*, the *bittern*, the *water rail*, the *blue* and *grey galding*, and the *crab-eater*, are the only birds of this order I recollect of ſeeing here.

Order VII.—*Pinnated Feet.*

Order VIII.—*Web-footed.*

Of this order is the *flamingo*, (*phoenicopterus ruber* of Lin.) which is of a ſurpriſing height, and the wings, when expanded in the ſun, reſemble a flame of fire. The *albatroſs*, the *auk*, the *guillemot*, the *gull*, the *ſtormy petterel*, the *creſted* and *wild duck*, and the *pelican* (*pelicanus occidentalis* Lin.) remarkable for its ſize, and the extraordinary bag or pouch that is ſuſpended under its bill, which the pelican makes uſe of to

ſecure its prey in. This pouch is ſometimes ſo ſpacious that one of them has been known to contain four gallons of water. The *noddy*, the *cormorant*, the *man of war bird*, the *booby*, and the *Tropic bird*.

AMPHI-

AMPHIBIOUS ANIMALS.

Four ſpecies of *turtle* are found on the ſhores of this iſland—the *green-turtle*, the *hawk's-bill*, (whoſe ſhell is famous for the brilliant poliſh it takes) the *loggerhead*, and the *land-tortoiſe*, which is remarkable for its extreme longevity. The green-turtle is reckoned one of the greateſt delicacies in the Weſt Indies. A variety of the *lacertae* or *lizard* ſpecies inhabit the trees here. The *guana* (*lacerta iguana* of Linnaeus) is the largeſt in Antigua. It is ſometimes upwards of ſix feet long; with a creſt indented like the teeth of a comb, two inches high, beginning on the crown of his head, and gradually diminiſhing to the point of his tail; under his jaw hangs a large bag, which he can dilate with air, or exhauſt at pleaſure. The guana is of various colours; but moſt commonly it is either brown, green, or blue. It is perfectly harmleſs. Its ſole weapon of defence is its tail, with which, how-

ever, it can give a violent blow. This reptile is often eaten in the Weſt Indies. They pretend its fleſh is as delicate as that of a chicken. The extraordinary ſpecies of lizard called the *wood-ſlave* (*lacerta gekko*) is frequently ſeen in this iſland. It is about ſeven or eight inches long; his tail ſhort, thick, and blunt at the point; his feet have five ſemi-palmated toes, with ſharp claws, wherewith he adheres ſtrongly even to ſmooth perpendicular ſurfaces; the eye is formed like a cat's, the pupil being long and narrow, and ending above and below in a point; the eye has a ſingular and faſcinating glare; and it is altogether a loathſome and diſagreeable animal. The wood-ſlave is one of the moſt venomous reptiles found in theſe iſlands. A gummy fluid exudes from all his pores, which bliſters and ulcerates the ſkin of thoſe who touch it. And under each claw is a ſmall bag filled with a thick blue-coloured matter, which is ſaid to be the chief ingredient uſed in the compoſition of the famous Malay poiſon, well known in the Eaſt Indies.

The

The *common lizards* are uſually from ten to fifteen inches long. The *ground lizard* is commonly of the colour of the earth on which it creeps; but thoſe that affect living among trees are always of a vivid green like the foliage they inhabit. The body of the lizard is covered with ſhining pellucid ſcales, that aſſume a variety of glowing colours every time they move, beſides their having the peculiarity of turning as black as jet if frightened. The tradition of this reptile's being attracted by, and faſcinated with, the ſound of muſic, is a fact of which, by experience, I can aſſert the veracity. I have frequently, when ſitting in the garden, ſung an air in a ſoft voice, which, in a few minutes, would draw the lizards from the ſhrubs and trees around to the ſpot where I was; where they would remain with their little heads gently inclined, their eyes immoveably rivetted to the place from whence the ſound proceeded, and their gloſſy ſcales preſenting a thouſand different hues every moment; but, as ſoon as the air ceaſed, the charm was broke, and the lizards made a precipitate retreat,

and concealed themſelves among the buſhes. This experiment I have frequently tried, and never once found it vary in its ſucceſs. Indeed it is a well known fact in the Weſt Indies, that, when the Negroes want to catch lizards, (which are a wholeſome and favourite food with them) the art they employ to allure them into their hands is whiſtling. All the lizard ſpecies are oviparous, and lay a ſoft egg of the conſiſtence of a jelly. A ſmall kind of *frog* is found in this iſland. The only reptiles of the ſerpent kind is the *coluber ſtriatulus* of Linnaeus, and a ſmall *caecilia* or *ſlow worm*. Both are perfectly harmleſs. The former is extremely beautiful, about ſix feet in length, with a ſmooth head, a ſtriated coffee-coloured back, and the belly of a lovely roſe colour.

FISHES.

FISHES†.

Div. I.—*Cetaceous Fiſhes.*

The *common*, and the *beaked* or *ſpermaceti whale*; the *high-finned cachalot*, the *dolphin*, the *grampus*, and the *porpoiſe*.

Div. II.—*Cartilaginous Fiſhes.*

The *ſting ray*, the *ſea devil* or *raia marta*, which is of an hideous aſpect; the body flat, about twelve feet in length, and ſeventeen in breadth; the mouth is four feet wide; the body is about two feet in thickneſs; the tail is fourteen feet long, and tapers to a fine point. One of theſe monſters was killed at Rendezvous Bay in this iſland, and it required ſeven yoke of oxen to drag him on ſhore. Five ſpecies of the *ſhark*, the *ſaw-fiſh*, the *unicorn fiſh*, the *old wife*, the

† Claſſed according to Pennant's Syſtem.

the *ſea bat* or *lophius veſpertilio*, which, though an inhabitant of the ocean, carries in its form the ſtriking reſemblance of an ill-formed quadruped; the pectoral fins having exactly the appearance of feet, and terminate by little points like claws. The *fiſhing frog* or *lophius piſcatorius*; ſeveral ſpecies of the *diamond fiſh* or *oſtracion*, which are extremely curious and beautiful. They are incloſed in a hard integument or ſhell, of a triangular ſhape, ſometimes marked with regular hexagonal ſcales, and ſometimes ſpotted. Several of the ſpecies are diſtinguiſhed by having one or more horns placed either on the head or back. The *oſtracion triqueter*, the *oſtracion cubitus*, and the *os bicornis*, are very delicate food; but the *os quadricornis* is poiſonous, and has the peculiarity of ſtrongly intoxicating the perſon who eats it. The *toad fiſh* or *tetrodon lagocephalus*, the *globe diodon*, and the *hedge-hog fiſh*, which have all the faculty of ſwelling themſelves out, when touched, till their bodies reſemble an inflated bladder, although their natural ſhapes are

ſlender

ſlender and handſome. The *hippocampus* or *ſea-horſe*.

Div. III.—*Boney Fiſhes.*

Section I.—*Apodal.*

The *conger eel*, the *ſpeckled eel*, and the *ſword-fiſh*.

Section II.—*Jugular.*

The *harp-fiſh* or *calyonimus lyra*.

Section III.—*Thoracic.*

The *ſucking fiſh*, the *dorado*, the *coryphaene* (vulgarly called the *dolphin*), the *parrot-fiſh*, the *father-laſher*, the *macaw fiſh*, the *moon-fiſh*, the *angel-fiſh*, the *Jew-fiſh*, the *ſnapper*, the *hog-fiſh*, the *pilot* or *rudder fiſh*, *whiting*, *bream*, *chubbs*, the *blue hind*, *rock hind*, *deep water hind*, and *poiſonous hind*, the *cobler-fiſh*, the *king-fiſh*, the *albicore*, *Spaniſh mackarel*, the *queen mullet*, the *bonetta*, the *cavally*, the *grunt*, and the *flying-gurnard*.

Section

Section IV.—*Abdominal.*

The *cat-fiſh*, the *barracuda*, which is a fiſh of dreadful voracity, that frequently attacks and devours the men here when they bathe in the open ſea. It is more dangerous to encounter the barracuda than even the ſhark; for that fiſh, having his mouth placed beneath a long projecting ſnout, is obliged to turn on his back before he can devour his prey, which gives an opportunity, or at leaſt a chance, of eſcape, (for many of our bold ſwimmers carry cutlaſſes in the water with them, and, while the ſhark is turning, they are ſometimes lucky enough to give him a mortal blow); whereas the barracuda is very ſwift, comes with open mouth, and has ſuch prodigious agility, that it is impoſſible to elude his rapacious jaw. The *garr*, the *doctor-fiſh*, the *argentine*, the *ſea pike*, the *ſilver-fiſh*, the *balahue*, and two ſpecies of *flying-fiſh*.

INSECTS†.

The *cockroach* or *blatta* is an inſect of the order *hemiptera* of Linnaeus, and as remarkable for its loathſome ſhape and ſmell, as for its miſchievous quality of gnawing books, linen, furniture, &c. and extraordinary fecundity, every egg it depoſits producing nine and thirty young ones. The *cricket* is likewiſe found here, particularly that ſpecies called the *mole-cricket* or *grillo talpa*, which always begins to be prodigiouſly noiſy at the approach of night; and, if one of them chances to take its ſtation under your bed, the ſhrill and diſagreeable note it emits will prove an effectual antidote againſt ſleep or reſt.

Of the order *lepidoptera*, is a very numerous tribe of *butterflies*; but none of them are remarkable

† Claſſed according to the Linnean Syſtem.

markable in this iſland for their beauty. There is a very miſchievous inſect here of the *phalaena* or *moth* ſpecies, the *eruca ſaccharivora*, which, in its caterpillar ſtate, is called the *borer*, from its property of perforating the body of the ſugar cane, ſucking out the juice, and reducing the pith to powder. This inſect has long been a peſt to the colonies, and it is impoſſible to extirpate it. Repeated experiments have been tried for the purpoſe; but none have yet ſucceeded. They are ſo extremely hardy, that an attempt was once made to kill one of them, by throwing it in a bottle of ſpirits of wine (an inſtantaneous death to all other inſects), yet the borer was found floating about, alive and briſk, nine and thirty hours after. In form it reſembles the white round maggot that breeds in the ſhell of the filberd.

Of the order *hymenoptera*, is a large ſpecies of *wild bee*, with a bright orange-coloured body. A numerous tribe of *ants*, of a prodigious ſize, that are of a very deſtructive nature, and kill

and

and eat up the little birds. The *lion-ant*, or *formica-leo*, is found abundantly in the ſandy ſoils of Antigua, where it digs a funnel-ſhaped den, and there lies in wait for flies and ſmall inſects, of which it makes its prey.

The *blue ichneumon waſp* is one of the moſt beautiful of the winged inſects here. The body and wings reſemble a brilliant blue foil, and the long feelers that adorn the head are of a deep orange colour. The *free maſon waſp* is ſo domeſtic as to build its neſt, which is made of mud or clay, in the inhabited chambers of houſes, and even under the teſter of the beds, and is found here. It is very harmleſs, and ſeldom, if ever, ſtings. The moſt troubleſome inſect in this iſland is the *muſquito*, of the order *diptera*. A great variety of inſects, of the order *aptera*, inhabit Antigua. That remarkable ſpecies of *ſpider*, the *phalangium incaudatum*, or *crab-ſpider*, as alſo the *aranea avicularia*, and the *aranea venatoria*, the *great hairy bird-eating ſpider* of Braſil, are all natives of this iſland. A kind of *ta-*

rantula too is found here, which reſides chiefly in rocky places and among old ruins. The bite occaſions convulſions and ſtranguries, and ſometimes proves mortal. But the idea of the patient's being relieved by the ſound of muſic is perfectly fabulous. The common domeſtic *ſpiders* in this country are of a prodigious ſize; the bodies are black and downy like velvet, while the ſponges and claws on their feet, and their eyes, are perfectly diſtinguiſhable (from their magnitude) without a microſcope.

The *ſcorpions* here, though of no great magnitude, are extremely venomous. Their bodies are of a compreſſed ſhape, covered with lamellated ſcales. They have eight legs, and next the head are placed two long arms, terminated by a pair of ſharp indented nippers. The tail is longer than the whole body; it conſiſts of ſeveral joints of equal lengths, and at the end of them is the ſting, which is of an incurvated ſhape, and a bag of poiſonous liquid is ſuſpended at the root of it. The ſcorpion is viviparous,

and

and brings forth young but once; for the little brood, in a week or two after their birth, faſten themſelves on their parent's back, and ſuck her to death. This furious little animal is frequently known to ſting itſelf in the head, when caught alive, and confined without means of eſcape.

Above ſeventeen different ſpecies of *crabs* are found on this iſland; the *cancer curſor* or *ſand-crab*; the *cancer pinnophylax* or *ſentry crab*; the *cancer minutus* or *minute crab*; *cancer ruricola montanus* or *mountain crab*; *cancer moenas* or *common crab*; *cancer ruricola* or *land crab*; *cancer floridus*, the *florid crab*, or *redſhank*; *cancer uca* or *jumbee crab*; *cancer pelaſgicus*, the *pelaſgic crab*, or *ſherrigo*; *cancer callapa* or *trunk crab*; *cancer paguſus* or *black-clawed crab*; *cancer longimanus* or *long-armed crab*; *cancer ſpinifer* or *thorny crab*; *cancer grapſus* or *rock crab*; *cancer arachnoides* or *ſpider crab*; *cancer granulatus* or *rough-ſhelled crab*; and *cancer bernhardus*, the *ſoldier*, or *hermit crab*. The laſt are remarkable from eſtabliſhing their reſidence in the empty ſhells of

other teſtaceous inſects, and remaining in them till their ſize increaſes too much to ſuffer their continuance in it any longer; when they chooſe another more ſuited to their bulk, and leave the old ones to younger inhabitants. This change is regularly made once in a twelvemonth, when they aſſemble in flocks on the ſea-ſhore, for the purpoſe of propagating their ſpecies and caſting their covering.

The *ſand-lobſter*, the *trunk-lobſter*, *ſea* and *pond cray fiſh*, *prawns* and *ſhrimps*, are found here in great abundance. The *centepé*, or *ſcolopendra morſitans*, is found on this and all the Caribbee Iſlands. It is fifteen inches long, and the body about the thickneſs of a man's finger. It conſiſts of a ſeries of lamellated ſcales, each ſcale having two legs affixed to it. The back is of a deep brown, growing paler towards the belly; the head and tail are crimſon; the former is armed with a pair of keen forceps, with which they pinch moſt ſeverely. The *ſcolopendra marina*, which is an inhabitant of the ſea, is much

larger

larger than the other, and the touch of it raiſes bliſters on the ſkin.

The *oniſcus phyſodes*, or *ſea-cockroach*, is about two inches long; it has fourteen feet without nippers; and the back is covered with ſeven lamellated tranſverſe ſcales or plates. This inſect buries itſelf in the ſand, and is often found adhering to the tongue of the *green-backed cavally* (*gaſteroſteus Carolinus* Lin.), where it ſheds its ſpawn, and brings forward its young. Nothing but actual proof puts this beyond a doubt; and I have ſeen the mother and her young ones all together in the mouth of that fiſh. The *whale louſe* is another ſpecies of oniſcus. They adhere to the back of the whale in multitudes, and torment the unwieldy animal with a ceaſeleſs itching, and often cauſe him to rub himſelf for relief againſt the bottoms of ſhips and large veſſels. A kind of *iulus*, or *gally worm*, is found here.

VERMES MOLLUSCÆ†,

OR

Soft Sea Insects.

Three ſpecies of the *aſcidia*, or *animal flower*, are found adhering to the rocks in this iſland. This extraordinary animal is ſomewhat of a worm or grub, with a circular bunch of tentaculae, round its mouth; this, when expanded, reſembles a carnation or pink, and is often of the moſt lively and glowing colours. A ſlender tube attached to a rock contains the body of the animal, which appears like the ſtalk, and into which, when alarmed, it withdraws its ſpreading flower; but ſoon puts it forth again, as its uſe, like a caſting net, is to incloſe and convey into the mouth ſmaller inſects for its food. The larger kind have no tube or covering, but adhere

† According to Linnæus.

here to the rock in holes and chinks by means of many thouſand little tubes or ſuckers placed on all parts of its body. The head is adorned with five ſhort ſtalks, each forming a ſmall radius like an umbellated flower, every ſmall radius compoſing a part of the larger one. The colours of this ſpecies of aſcidia are generally either brown or black.

The *holothuria phyſales*, or *Portugueſe man of war*, is often ſeen floating on the ſea near the windward ſhores of this iſland. It is compoſed of a parcel of ſoft threads like feet, ſuſpended to the bottom of a purple bladder almoſt pellucid, and full of an acrid air, which bliſters the ſkin if it happens to burſt in the hand. Theſe holothuriae are ſingularly beautiful when floating on the ſurface of the water in a clear day. Of the *aſterias* or *ſea-ſtars*, a variety of kinds and ſizes are found here. The *caput meduſae* is the fineſt. The *reticulata* is eighteen inches diameter, and very beautiful. The *echinus*, or *ſea-egg*, is a round or oval ſhell, perforated

like

like the fineſt fillagree, and covered with ſpines on moveable joints ſtrongly adhering to the body, by means of a nerve which runs through them into it. There are two large perforations at the top and bottom of the ſhell, one of which is the mouth of the animal.

PLANTS.

PLANTS†.

A

The *aloes-ſemper-virens perfoliata*, or *Barbadoes aloe*, is found in this iſland, from which the well known medicinal gum is prepared. The *agave Americana*, or *American aloe*, grows with the utmoſt luxuriance in the Savannas, and among the cliffs of the rocks. The flower ſtem is thirty feet high, and crowned with a profuſion of bloſſoms diſpoſed in a pannicle or diffuſed ſpike; they are of a ſplendid orange colour, and diſtil a kind of honey or nectareous dew.

The *amomum-zinziber*, or *ginger plant*, grows wild in the Savannas. The root is medicinal, and makes an excellent ſweatmeat.

The

† Placed alphabetically according to the Linnæan names, with very little variation.

The *anacardium-acajou*, or *caſhew tree*, is a low, wide-ſpreading tree; the branches crooked and ſtraggling, and the leaves oval; the fruit, which is called here the *cherry*, is ſomewhat like a large apple; it is of a pale yellow, but the ſide that faces the ſun is uſually diffuſed with a lovely bluſh; it has a very fragrant ſmell, and is full of a rough aſtringent juice, which is however very pleaſant to the taſte. At the top of the cherry grows a naked ſeed, ſhaped like a ſheep's kidney, called the *caſhew-nut*; the kernel is eaten when roaſted, and has a very fine flavour. It is envelopped with a thin ſhell, that contains an oily inflammable fluid, which is very cauſtic. The ladies in the Weſt India Iſlands make uſe of it to extract the freckles from their faces. They ſometimes ſpread it all over their hands, neck, and face; and, in a few days, the ſkin peals off in great flakes, after which the complexion appears for ſome time exquiſitely fair, but is more liable to ſun-burn than ever; beſides the pain of this operation is excruciating. The milky juice of the acajou is often employed

ployed to ſtain the initials of a name in linen; it leaves a jetty mark that will not eraſe by waſhing. An exceeding fine gum exudes from the bark of this tree when perforated.

A variety of the *annonae* ſpecies is found here —the *annona-reticulata*, or *cuſtard-apple*; the *annona-muricata*, or *ſourſop-apple*; and the *annona glabra*, or *ſugar-apple*. The *apocynum-erectum*, or *wild ipecacoan*, is one of the ſtrongeſt vegetable poiſons in this iſland, and often kills the cattle if they chance to bite the bloſſoms.

The *arundo-bambos*, or *bamboo-cane*, grows to a great height. It has no regular ſtem; but the branches part and riſe from the root. They are divided into long joints, which are perfectly hollow. The leaves are lanceolated. The bamboo-cane is a very uſeful plant for many purpoſes. The *anthelminthia-ſpigelia*, or *worm-graſs*. The *arum-ſagittifolium*, or *dumb-cane*, is of a ſubtle and poiſonous nature. The taſte of it is certain death.

The

The *arum virginiana*, or *tannier*, and the *arum-eſculentum*, or *eddoe*, are two excellent farinaceous vegetables, and a very favourite food with the Negroes.

The *aurantium dulciſſimum*, or *China orange*; the *aurantium amarum*, or *Seville orange*; the *aurantium maximum*, or *ſhadock*; and the *aurantium minor*, or *forbidden fruit*, are all found here in great perfection. The trees are bowed down to the ground above half the year with the load of their delicious produce.

The *anguria trilobata*, or *water melon*. The *acacia mimoſa*, or *acacic buſh*, is a ſpecies of *ſenſitive* plant. It bears a yellow bloſſom, that exhales the moſt delightful ſmell imaginable.

The *adiantum capillis veneris*, or *maiden-hair*, is indigenous in this iſland. The ſtalk is as black as ebony, and the leaves ſmall and oval. From this plant the ſyrup of capillaire is extracted.

B

The *bombax gossypium*, or *silk cotton* tree, bears an oblong shaped pod, containing a parcel of long filaments, of a wonderful fineness, that have a lovely gloss like silver. These are the alae belonging to the seeds. This tree supplies the Caribs with wood for building their perioques or canoes, which they cut out of the trunk. It is a light timber fit for no other purpose.

The *bromelia anana*, or *pine apple*, grows here without cultivation. The *bauhinia purpurea*, or *mountain-ebony*, is found here, but is nevertheless extremely scarce. The *bombax-ceiba*, or *down-tree*, whose pod is even more curious than that of the *silk cotton*, is likewise found here. The *bromelia karatas*, or *pinquin*, is a fruit resembling a small cucumber in shape. It is about the thickness of the finger, and the ends sharply pointed. It has much the flavour of the pine-apple, but rather more tart and poignant.

C

So numerous a tribe of the *cactus*, or *prickle-pear* ſpecies, is found here, that I have not memory enough to enumerate them. They have the peculiarity of growing (ſometimes to a vaſt height) without any regular ſtem. The firſt leaf that appears above ground produces two or three more that grow out of its top and ſides; others again proceed from theſe, and ſo on *ad infinitum*. The leaves are ſtuck full of prickles, or little darts, as fine as the ſting of a bee. The fruit is armed with the ſame weapons; but, when the outward ſkin, in which they are lodged, is peeled off, the Negroes eat it. This fruit is ſhaped like a pear, and full of a ſweet crimſon juice, often uſed by confectioners to colour their creams, ices, &c. The Weſt India ladies employ it not only as a dye for their ribbons and gauzes, but alſo as one for their cheeks.

The *canella alba*, or *wild cinnamon*, flouriſhes here with aſtoniſhing luxuriance. The leaf has

a

a ſtrong, ſpicy, aromatic taſte; and the berries are delightfully fragrant. A variety of the *capſicum* or *red pepper* buſhes are found here. The *cedrela odorata*, or *baſtard cedar*; and the *citrus medica*, or *citron tree*, the fruit of which makes an excellent conſerve. The *coccoloba uvifera*, or *ſea-ſide grape*, grows chiefly among the cliffs of the rocks that overhang the ſea. The fruit is extremely aſtringent and diſagreeable to the taſte. The *coffea occidentalis*, or *coffee-buſh*, grows in great quantities in this iſland. It riſes to the height of ten or twelve feet. The foliage is beautifully verdant, and the flower white, and delicate beyond deſcription. The berry is red when arrived at maturity; its flavour is, however, far inferior to that of the Turkey coffee.

The *creſcentia unica*, or *calabaſh* tree, grows to a great ſize. Its branches, naturally flexible, are bowed to the ground by the load of the vaſt fruit it bears, which, when arrived at maturity, is near two feet in diameter, and of a globular ſhape. While on the tree it is green; but, af-

ter it has been plucked a few days, brown. The pulp is ſour and unſavoury; it is never eaten; and the Negroes extract it carefully from the ſhell, in which they uſually keep their liquors and proviſions; it will contain twenty-four pints of water, and is notwithſtanding as light and as thin as paper.

The *croton lacciferum*, or *phyſic nut buſh*, bears a ſeed which is medicinal, and acts as a powerful emetic. The juice of the nut makes a dark ſtain on linen, that will never eraſe; but, if waſhed, will corrode into holes. Quadrupeds, and indeed every other ſpecies of animal, have ſuch an antipathy to the phyſic nut buſh, that they never approach it, and, if ever ſo preſſed with hunger, can never be prevailed on to feed upon it.

The *croton urens*, or *tallow tree*. The *carica papaya*, or *papaw tree*, has a ſimple, ſtrait, ſlender ſtem, which is as hollow within as a trumpet. The leaves are large, palmated, variouſly cut,

cut, and ſtanding upon large foot-ſtalks. The fruit, which is orange-coloured, oval-ſhaped, and about the ſize of a citron, hangs in ſeveral rows cloſe one to another, and forms a broad girdle all round the ſtem of the tree, juſt under the cluſter of leaves: The fruit makes a good conſerve.

D

The *dioſcorea bulbifera*, or *yam vine*. The *dolichios urens*, from which is extracted a juice reputed to be a ſovereign remedy in worm caſes.

F

The *ficus religioſa*, or *Eaſt India banian tree*.

G

The *goſſypium*, or *cotton ſhrub*, is about nine feet high. It bears an oval pod, which, when ripe, ſplits open in ſeveral partitions, that diſcover the cotton or down which enfolds the ſeeds. It is as white as ſnow, and in as many flakes as

there are cells or internal diviſions in the capſule.

The *guiacum*, or *lignum vitae*, is found here. The bark is white and gummy, the leaves winged, the bloſſoms of a beautiful violet colour, and the berries are uſed as bitters. The raſpings of the bark are likewiſe uſeful in medicine.

The *glycine tomentoſa*, or *wild liquorice*, is a ſcandent plant, with winged leaves. It bears berries ſo beautiful, that the Weſt India ladies have them perforated, and wear them ſtrung like beads in necklaces and bracelets. They are about the ſize of a pea, oval, hard, and of a glowing red like coral, with a black ſpot directly in the middle. The *guilandia moringa*, or *yellow nickar*, which likewiſe bears a beautiful berry like poliſhed marble, worn in earings, and as taſſels to watch-chains, &c.

H

The *hypomane lacteſcens*, or *manchineel tree*, grows chiefly by the banks of the ſea. Its verdure, its foliage, and the beautiful apple it bears, would render it the moſt delightful tree within the Tropics, were it not perhaps one of the moſt deſtructive. The bark is filled with a thick, clammy, lacteſcent fluid, which is ſo ſubtile a poiſon that the Caribs and Indians dip the points of their arrows in it when they wiſh the wounds they inflict to prove mortal. The very foliage of the tree is ſo venomous, that, if you ſeek ſhelter under its branches in a ſhower of rain, the drops that chance to fall on you, if they have touched the leaves, will bliſter your ſkin. The manchineel apple is certain death, if eaten. The wood of this tree is ſuperior, with reſpect to hardneſs, poliſh, and colour, as well as fineneſs of grain, to the beſt mahogany. The *hymenaea courbar*, or *locuſt tree*. The *hibiſcus eſculentus*, or *ocro*. The *hura crepitans*, or *ſand-box tree*, is remarkable for the fruit it bears, which is about the ſize of an orange, of a globular

bular compreſſed ſhape, and divided into ſeveral cells, from about ten to twelve in number, each cell incloſing a flat ſeed. The ſand-box is an entire hard ſhell, without any pulp; the cells are divided by thin membranes. When the fruit is ripe, it ſplits and falls from the tree, and the ſeeds are ſcattered to a great diſtance round it. The ſand-box ſplits with prodigious elaſticity, and accompanied with a noiſe as loud as the report of a piſtol. The centre of this extraordinary capſule is hollow, and perforated with a number of little points at the top, which has applied to it the name of *ſand-box*, as it can be adapted to that purpoſe extremely well. The ſeeds of this fruit are very purgative. The *haematoxylon campechenſis*, or *logwood*, ſo much in requeſt for the fine purple dye it produces, is found abundantly on this iſland. The leaves are winged, and it bears a pale yellow bloſſom, ſomewhat reſembling that of the mignionette: The bark diſtils a very fine gum. The *holcus major aſſurgens*, or *Guinea graſs*, is the chief food appropriated to the horſes and horned cattle: It is, in

that

that reſpect, one of the moſt valuable graſſes cultivated in the Weſt Indies.

I

The *jatropa manioc*, or *maniock plant*, riſes with a ſtreight, ſimple ſtem to the height of ſeven or eight feet. The ſtalk is nearly black, and, at the top, it bears a cluſter of dark palmated leaves. The root is a deadly poiſon; yet, when the milky liquor it contains is expreſſed from it, it is converted into a bread called *caſſava:* The Negroes make it their chief diet, and prepare it themſelves, which is done by means of a wooden engine, extremely ſimple in its conſtruction, and managed by a wheel, while the manioc root, after being thoroughly peeled, waſhed, raſped, and pulverized till it is reduced to the conſiſtence of ſaw-duſt, is preſſed between two flat boards, which finally ſqueezes out the poiſonous fluid: It is then dried in the ſun, and baked into large, flat, circular cakes, which, when toaſted and buttered, are criſp and very pleaſant to the taſte. The *jatropa urens*, or *wild caſſava*.

L

The *laurus perſea*, or *avocado pear-tree*, bears a fruit called the *vegetable marrow*. The name is perfectly expreſſive of its taſte. It reſembles a common pear in ſhape and colour; but the pulp is as ſoft as a cuſtard, and melts in the mouth. It is both wholeſome and nouriſhing, but too luſcious to be eat in any conſiderable quantity. The *lilia jacoboea*, or *Guernſey lily*, is one of the moſt beautiful flowers indigenous in this iſland. The petals are crimſon, powdered with gold ſpangles, that render a ſurpriſing luſtre when the ſun ſhines upon them.

M

The *mangifera mango*, or *mango tree*, is one of the moſt beautiful in the American world. The foliage is extremely ſhady and verdant, and it bears the moſt delicious fruit imaginable. The taſte is highly aromatic, and it exhales a charming perfume. The mango is frequently ſent to Europe in pickle. The *maranta-galango*, or *Indian*

dian arrow root, ſprings from a moſt valuable medicinal root, which, when pulverized, is white, and reſembles fine ſtarch or hair-powder. It is mixed with warm water, which cauſes it to thicken to a gelatinous conſiſtency, and it is then adminiſtered as a remedy in dyſenteries and many other Tropical complaints. It is one of the moſt wholeſome and nouriſhing foods imaginable for people in a weak debilitated ſituation, or ſubject to nervous diſorders. This plant takes its name from being an effectual antidote againſt the venom of the poiſoned arrows made uſe of by the Caribs.

The *muſa paradiſaica*, or *banana tree*, has a ſtem ſo porous and ſpongy that it cannot properly be termed wood. It is of a vivid green, ſoft and pappy, inſomuch that the juice ſpurts out on the leaſt preſſure. The leaves are two or three yards long, and meaſure one foot acroſs. They afford an excellent ſhade, and are alſo made uſe of to ſtuff the mattreſſes of beds in this country, and anſwer that purpoſe extremely well.

well. The fruit is ſhaped ſomewhat like a cucumber, about five or ſix inches long; it hangs in cluſters on a peduncle at the bottom of the leaves, which grow in a large bunch at the top of the tree.

The *muſa ſapientum*, or *plantain tree*, bears ſo ſtrong a reſemblance to the banana, that the niceſt eye can find no difference either in the ſtem or leaves; the fruits, however, are not perfectly ſimilar.

The *mimoſa ſenſitiva*, or *ſenſitive plant*. The *momordica charantia*, or *ceraſée*. The *mammoea Americana*, or *mammee ſappota*, equals, if not ſurpaſſes the Engliſh oak in beauty; it riſes to a majeſtic height, and ſpreads to a vaſt circumference. The foliage is of a deep green, extremely thick and umbrageous. It bears a fruit about the ſize of a melon; the pulp is crimſon, and taſtes ſomewhat like a carrot, but is ſweeter and more agreeable to the palate.

N

The *nicotiana tabacuma*, or *tobacco plant*, is much cultivated by the Negroes here, who are extremely fond of it.

P

The *palma corypha*, or *cabbage tree*, grows to the height of two hundred feet, and holds the pre-eminence in beauty as well as loftineſs over every tree in the Weſt Indies. The roots form a maſs of fibres without any ramifications. The ſtem is cylindrical, and tapers regularly to the top, it is ſimple, without branches; the bark is of an aſh colour till within a few yards of the top, when it changes to a deep green, and becomes ſoft and tender; the leaves (which are a compoſition between a leaf and a branch) hang gracefully round, and reſemble a plume of feathers. The ſtalk or branch that ſupports the wings or partial leaves is twelve feet in length, and the ſmall ones between three and four. The baſe of the great leaf or branch is ſolid; it envelopes and embraces the ſtem, and is uſually blanched. The Negroes make uſe of it as a

cradle for their children. The bloſſoms are diſpoſed in a pannicle, or diffuſed ſpike, placed at the bottom of the cluſter of leaves. A green twiſted ſpire riſes in the centre of this cluſter; it is the ſpathe that incloſes the young foliage.

The *palma cocos*, or *cocoa nut tree*, bears a great reſemblance to the cabbage tree, though it is not ſo tall, and the ſtem generally inclines to one ſide. The great branches, with their pinnae, or partial leaves, are however perfectly ſimilar; but they are faſtened together at the bottom with a kind of web, interwoven with ſtrong brown threads that grow out of the tree. It is very curious, and reſembles that coarſe kind of canvas of which the ſails of a ſhip are conſtructed. The cocoa nuts hang over this web in cluſters, to the number of ten or twelve. The firſt covering of this nut is a ſtrong tegument compoſed of rough brown threads, ſomewhat like the web that unites the bottoms of the leaves, but rather finer; within this is a hard oval ſhell, that takes as fine a poliſh as ebony,

and

and is frequently carved into vaſes, goblets, &c. This ſhell, when the fruit is young, incloſes a bluiſh jelly, that taſtes like a ſweet almond, and afterwards becomes a hard kernel, which adheres all round to the inſide of the ſhell, and is not more than two inches thick; the hollow part contains about a pint of a cool milky liquor, extremely refreſhing and grateful to the taſte.

Palma, a ſpecies of *wild palm-tree*, is found here, the trunk of which is round, upright, and ſtudded regularly from top to bottom with protuberances like ſcales, which are the veſtiges of decayed leaves. From the top iſſues a cluſter of leaves eight or nine feet long, that hang round like an umbrella, with a graceful curve towards the earth. This tree greatly reſembles the palma phoenix, or date tree; but it does not bear that fruit, neither is the palm wine to be extracted from it.

The *palma camaerops*, or *palmetto tree*, riſes to the height of fifty or ſixty feet. From the upper end of the trunk iſſues a bundle of leaves, which, in turning off, form a round head; each leaf repreſents a fan five or ſix feet in expanſion, ſupported by a ſtalk of the ſame length.

The *palma elate*, or *mountain cabbage tree*, is one of the moſt exquiſite vegetables in the world. The *parkinſonia-aculeata*, or *Jeruſalem thorn*.

Three ſpecies of *paſſion flowers* are found in this iſland—the *paſſiflora caeruleus*, or *blue paſſion flower*; the *paſſiflora maliformis* is a luxuriant vine, that bears a fruit called the *granadilla*, and which contains a cool jelly, full of ſeeds, of a tart agreeable flavour. The *paſſiflora-laurifolia*, ſo called from the reſemblance of its leaf to that of the laurel, bears a flower nearly reſembling, but not quite ſimilar to, that of the maliformis. Its fruit, (which is called the *water lemon*) in ſhape, ſize, and colour, reſembles the apricot;

apricot; but the inſide is a jelly with ſeeds like the granadilla.

The *piſonia aculeata*, or *ſingrigo*. The *poinciana pulcherrima*, or *Barbadoes flower fence*, is a ſhrub bearing a bloſſom not only uncommonly beautiful, but likewiſe medicinal.

The *pſidium pomiferum*, or *guava buſh*, bears a beautiful flower like that of the myrtle, but much larger. The fruit is about the ſize of a tennis ball, and the pulp full of little ſeeds of an agreeable flavour; ſome are white and ſome crimſon. The guava makes an excellent preſerve, and the young buds are medicinal.

The *punica*, or *pomegranate*, is one of the moſt beautiful ſhrubs in the American world. Its branches are ſlender, almoſt entirely covered with ſmall green leaves, and ſo flexible and pliant that they are bowed to the ground by the weight of their own fruit. The flowers are crimſon, admirably formed, and likewiſe medi-

cinal. The fruit is the pleaſanteſt and moſt grateful imaginable.

R

The *ricinus palma chriſti* is a ſhrub that bears a palmated leaf, and large cluſters of a ſmall round fruit or berry, which are ſeverally enveloped with a green huſk armed with prickles like the horſe-cheſnut. The ſeed reſembles a common bean, and when preſſed yields a liquor called *caſtor oil*, which is ſtrongly purgative, and in every reſpect a ſafe, and almoſt infallible, medicine in caſes of the greateſt danger. This oil may be reckoned one of the moſt valuable tropical productions imported to Europe. Several kinds of the *rhiziophera*, or *mangrove tree*, are found here. The *ribes*, or *Weſt India gooſeberry*, though it ſomewhat reſembles the European in form and flavour, has the peculiarity of being covered (inſtead of the ſoft hairy down) with a number of little green leaflets that grow out of the pulp.

S

The *ſaccharum arundo*, or *ſugar-cane*, is a ſpecies of reed, divided into joints two or three inches long, and filled with a pith that yields the ſweet juice or ſyrup, which is afterwards (by a long and tedious proceſs) converted into ſugar. The body of the cane is yellow, and covered with a fine down or hair; the leaves are long, ſerrated, and pointed at the end. The ſugar-cane is fifteen months from the time of growing till fit to cut, and ripe for the mill. It is then from ten to twelve feet in height. The *ſloania-dentata*, or *ſappadilla tree*, bears a fruit with a ſoft juicy pulp, extremely cool and refreſhing to the palate. The *ſmilax China*, or *China plant*, ſo remarkable for its prodigious foliage, grows in great perfection on this iſland. The *Swietania mahogani*, or *mahogany tree*; the *ſolanum lycoperſicum*, or *tomata*; the *ſolanum Bahamenſe*, or *mad-apple*; the *ſolanum melongena*, or *cockroach apple*; the *ſolanum Virginiacum*, or *canker berry*; and the *ſolanum ovifera*, or *egg plant*.

T

The *tamarindus Americanus*, or *tamarind tree*, grows to the ſize of our Engliſh cheſnut trees. The branches are ſlender, flexible, and bear a ſmall winged leaf, of a delightful verdure. The foliage is thick, and affords a charming umbrage. The fruit, which grows in long flat pods, is too acid to be eat in its natural ſtate, but makes a very good ſweetmeat, and, when mixed with water, is a pleaſant and wholeſome beverage. The *typha anguſtifolia*, or *red mace*, is found here.

The Linnaean Names of the following Plants are unknown.

The *pomme roſe tree* bears a beautiful apple, about the ſize of a golden pippin, which exhales a charming odour like that of a roſe, but, if poſſible, ſweeter. The *franche pan* is a lacteſcent ſhrub, that grows with prodigious luxuriance here. The branches are ſtrong and cylindrical; the leaves of a light green, ſhaded with

with dark brown ſtripes; the flower is ſhaped like that of the jeſſamine, but conſiderably larger; the petals are embelliſhed with the gloſſy meal that is ſeen on thoſe of the auricula; the inſide of the corolla is white, but the tranſparency of the petals faintly tinge it with the roſy bluſh that colours the outſide. This flower has likewiſe a delightful perfume. The *conque nut*, which grows on a vine, reſembles the walnut in ſhape and colour; but the inſide is a jelly full of ſeeds. The *bell buſh* is a pretty ſhrub, that bears a yellow funnel-ſhaped flower. The ſtalks are lacteſcent.

Thus ſpring the living herbs, profuſely wild,
O'er all the deep green earth, beyond the pow'r
Of botaniſts to number up their tribes.

THOMSON.

FINIS.

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Judith Gee

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